IN THE CLAIMS:

1.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus for discriminating a document with a ~~data~~ discriminating information, said apparatus comprising:

image reading means for reading image data from [[a]] said document prepared in an optional format;

image data cutting out means for cutting out image data corresponding to a designated specified portion of said document from said image data read by said image reading means;

color constituent extracting means for analyzing color constituents of said image data cut out by said cutting out means and setting a color separation parameter in color space for a specific color constituent of said image data cut out; and

color constituent separating means for producing said ~~data~~ discriminating information ~~for said specific portion from said image data cut out~~ based on said color separation parameter ~~from~~ set by said color constituent extracting means,

wherein said discriminating information for said document to be discriminated is produced based on said color separation parameter and compared with said discriminating information.

2.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus for discriminating a document as set forth in ~~Claim~~ claim 1, wherein said color separation parameter set by said color constituent extracting means is stored in a document discriminating dictionary unit together with said ~~data~~ discriminating information.

3   (Application No.: 10/049,635)

3.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus for discriminating a document as set forth in ~~Claim~~ claim 2, further comprising a document determination means for comparing for determination ~~said data~~ said discriminating information ~~prepared~~ produced from image data obtained by reading a document to be discriminated based on said color separation parameter with said ~~data~~ discriminating information stored in said document discriminating dictionary unit.

4.   (Currently Amended) A method for discriminating a document prepared in an optional format based on image data read from said document, said method comprising the steps of:

cutting out image data corresponding to a designated specified portion of said document;

analyzing color constituents of said image data so cut out, selecting a specific color constituent and setting a color separation parameter in color space for the selected color constituent; and

~~preparing data~~ producing a discriminating information for said specified portion from said cut out image data based on said color separation parameter; whereby

~~said~~ a document to be discriminated is discriminated by said ~~data~~ discriminating information.

5.   (Currently Amended) A method for discriminating a document as set forth in ~~Claim~~ claim 4, wherein said color constituent is analyzed with three primary colors of color, one of said three primary colors is selected as said specific color constituent, and

said color separation parameter is determined based on density distributions of said three primary colors.

6.   (Currently Amended) A method for discriminating a document as set forth in ~~Claim~~ claim 4, wherein said color separation parameter is stored in the document discriminating dictionary unit together with said ~~data~~ discriminating information.

7.   (Currently Amended) A method for discriminating a document as set forth in ~~Claim~~ claim 6, wherein ~~data~~ discriminating information is ~~prepared~~ produced from image data obtained by reading a document to be discriminated based on said color separation parameter, and wherein said ~~data~~ discriminating information so ~~prepared~~ produced is compared for determination with said ~~data~~ discriminating information stored in said document discriminating dictionary unit.